

TENNderCARE NEWS

Fall 2007

A NEWSLETTER FOR PRETEENS, TEENS, AND YOUNG ADULTS WHO ARE TENNCARE MEMBERS.

Sports Physical Is Not Same as Regular Physical

If you like to play school sports, more than likely you had to get a sports physical. But don't be fooled. This does not take the place of a regular checkup, also known as a TENNderCare checkup.

A sports physical is different from a TENNderCare checkup. The sports physical focuses on your well-being as it relates to playing a sport. It's more limited than a regular physical. Even if your sports physical exam doesn't reveal any problems, it's always a good idea to monitor yourself when you play sports. Report any changes in your condition, such as shortness of breath, to your coach or doctor.

During a regular physical, your doctor will address your overall well-being, which may include things that are unrelated to sports. You should get a TENNderCare checkup once a year, whether you play sports or not. **TENNderCare checkups are FREE to TennCare members through age 20.**

The following things will be done at the visit:

- Health history
- Complete physical exam
- Lab tests as needed
- Shots as needed
- Vision/hearing screening
- Developmental/behavioral screening as appropriate
- Advice on how to keep healthy.

You can ask your doctor to give you both types of exams during one visit. Just make sure you request both exams when you make your appointment so enough time will be allowed. ■

Mike the Myth Slayer!

Myth: Mononucleosis or mono is a kissing disease.

Mike: Mono is a virus-caused illness that can be spread in a variety of ways. A person can spread mono even if they have never had mono. The best way to treat mono is to get plenty of rest.



Spare a Moment of Pain for Lifetime Protection

If you don't like to get shots, you're not alone. But shots to protect you from serious diseases are important. Diseases like measles, mumps and whooping cough are making a comeback on school campuses because many teens are not up to date on their shots. Are you?

New immunizations may now be recommended that were not available when you were younger. The good news is you can still get a shot if you've missed it. And if you've missed some shots in a series of vaccines, you don't need to get the whole series again — you can simply pick up where you left off.

Doctors now recommend that all teens should have received a full course of shots against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (called the Tdap vaccine)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (the MMR vaccine)
- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal infection
- Human papilloma virus (HPV) (for girls)
- Varicella (chickenpox) if you have not had the disease

Remember, shots are FREE if you are a TennCare member under the age of 21. ■

Tips to Ease the Fear of Shots



■ **Distract yourself while you're waiting. Bring along a book or game** — something you'll get completely caught up in so you're not sitting in the waiting room thinking about the shot. Or listen to a relaxing CD.

■ **Tell your doctor (or nurse) if you're nervous.** Medical professionals are used to people who fear shots, and they'll be able to help you relax.

■ **Concentrate on taking slow, deep breaths.** Breathe all the way down into your belly. Deep breathing can help people relax — and focusing on something other than the shot can take your mind off it.

■ **Relax your arm.** If you're tense — especially if you tense up the area where you're getting the shot — it can make it more painful.

■ **Promise yourself a treat. Give yourself a reward and some praise!**

Source: www.kidshealth.org

Medical Home: Your First Step for Health Care

Do you have a medical home? Your medical home is the first place you should go when you are sick or injured.

This is usually referred to as your primary care provider or PCP. Your primary doctor should be able to take care of most

of your medical needs. This includes preventive care and treatment for new medical problems.

If you do not have a medical home, it is important for you to find one before you get sick. When you become sick or injured, you will need and want to see a doctor who already knows your health history. Having regular checkups with the same doctor can help him or her find health problems and give you advice. Your primary doctor can be a general internist, pediatrician or family practice doctor. Women may choose a gynecologist to be their primary doctor.

Even if you think you need a specialist, your medical home should be your first

call when you are sick. Your primary doctor should be able to take care of most of your medical needs. He or she can refer you to a specialist if your problem is rare or difficult to manage. You may also feel more at ease talking about your health with a doctor that knows you.

You should see your doctor at least once a year for a checkup, especially if you have existing health problems. If it has been more than a year since your last doctor visit, call and schedule a checkup. Together, you and your doctor can work on a plan to improve your health and prevent disease. And that means a happier life ahead! ■



Are You Depressed or Just Plain Sad?

- The loss of a loved one (as long as symptoms do not last more than two months)
- Drugs, alcohol or medication
- A general medical condition

Allow yourself the right to be sad. When painful events happen, being sad and crying can give you relief. Denying your feelings can be bad for you if those feelings build up and do long-term damage.

Depression

A person who is depressed has no control over his or her feelings. Those feelings cannot be ignored and can be very disruptive. Depression can last for weeks, months or years. A depressed person usually feels helpless and hopeless. Since depression is not the same as sadness, the feeling of depression doesn't always go away on its own.

You may be suffering from depression if you have some or all the following symptoms, nearly every day.

- Depressed mood most of the day
- Loss of interest in most daily activities, most of the day
- Major weight changes or changes in appetite
- Change in sleep habits
- Loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness and guilt
- Difficulty thinking or concentrating
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempt, or specific plan for committing suicide

If you think you might have depression, talk to your doctor. Simple tests can help determine if you need to be treated for depression. If you feel that you could harm yourself or someone else, seek medical help right away. ■

"I feel so depressed!"

Have you ever found yourself saying or thinking that statement? Some people think depression is a very strong feeling of sadness. But, there is a difference between sadness and depression.

Sadness

Everyone is sad some of the time. It is a normal reaction to painful events. Normal sadness should end when a person comes to terms with the troubles that caused him or her to feel sad.

If you have had strong feelings of sadness for a very long time, you might want to see if your sadness is linked to depression. It is most likely that you do NOT have depression if your sadness is caused by:

Manly Men Afraid of Doctors?

Think you're indestructible? Can't be harmed?

Sure, that's what many advertisers, pop culture and peers have you think.

You may feel perfectly fine. But you may actually be at a higher risk for health problems if you're a male between 15 and 19 years old.

Unfortunately, many teenage males think it is "unmanly" to see a doctor. If you're one of them, keep reading.

Based on a study of males 15 to 19 years old, most in

the study thought health care is not an important part of being a man. However, more than half of those surveyed said they are sexually active. Also, about 20 percent answered "yes" to two or more of the activities below:

- Use alcohol
- Smoke tobacco
- Use cocaine
- Have been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection
- Have forced someone else to have sex

These risky behaviors make it more important than ever to get regular checkups. Even if you are not doing any of these activities, it is

still important to get a checkup every year.

Step up to the plate.

- Call your doctor.
- Say you want to schedule a TENNderCare checkup. The checkup is free to TennCare members under age 21.
- Develop a positive and friendly relationship with your doctor.

Teenage males who have good health habits now can greatly reduce the risk of health problems throughout their lives. ■

No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, birthplace, national origin, sex, age, disability, or religion. Do you think you've been treated unfairly? Do you have more questions? Do you need more help? You can make a free call to the Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287. In Nashville, call 743-2000.

Nadie recibe un trato diferente debido a su raza, color de la piel, lugar de nacimiento, idioma, sexo, edad, discapacidad, o religión. ¿Cree que lo han tratado injustamente? ¿Tiene más preguntas? ¿Necesita más ayuda? Usted puede llamar gratis al Centro de Servicio para Asistencia Familiar al 1-866 311-4290. En Nashville, llame al 743-2001.

Interpretation and translation services are free to TennCare members. Please call Customer Service at 800-690-1606 for more information.

Si usted habla español, tenemos representantes que le pueden ayudar. Por favor llame por teléfono al número que se encuentra en la parte de atrás de su carta de identidad, y pregunte por un representante que hable español. Los servicios de interpretación y traducción son gratuitos para todos. Gracias.



Need A Ride?

If you need a ride to your doctor or health department, call: **1-800-690-1606**

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TENNder CARE

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TENNESSEE'S EPSDT PROGRAM